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AN INCIDENT.

WRITTEN FOR THE NEW YORK CLIPPER.
BY WILLI H. SHADE.

The mirrors glisten; the scene is gay
And brighter than noontide of Summer day
Though all without is drear and chill,
And darkness hang o'er vale and hill,
And the patter of feet in ceaseless rush
Is heard outside in the Winter slush.

His hat is silk, his warm coat long;
And, calling for wine, he hums a song.
Then fills his glass, and drains it, too,
Though first exclaiming: "A toast to you,
Oh, sparkling wine, so rich and rare,
You make of the sot a millionaire!"

A vagrant standing away a pace—
A haggard look on his bloated face—
Hears, and raising his goblet—so—
Watching the sparkle come and go—
Says: "Though that be true or not,
You make of the millionaire a sot!"

THE LADY OF THE WAGER.

WRITTEN FOR THE NEW YORK CLIPPER.
BY ETTIE ROGERS.

"All I should want by which to identify a person would be his, or her, description. People who fail to do so lack the qualities, or gifts, of keen penetration and of comprehensive observation."

And handsome, boastful Guy Berimo spoke with a voice and manner of entire and sincere conviction. "Do you claim that if I should describe to you a man whom you have never seen you could recognize the man solely by the description if you should happen afterwards to see him?" Harvey Alnay inquired.

"Certainly."
"Or a woman, either?"
"Or a woman, either! Why not?"
"What will you wager?" Alnay asked.
"Oh, almost anything," Berimo answered with a yawn—"anything from a V to cigars and champagne for the crowd."
"I'll take that bet."
"All right. Let us have the description."
"Well, then, it is a woman, young and"—
"Ah, indeed!" Berimo interrupted with sudden animation.

The possibility of his bit of detective pastime being as fascinating as it was novel had occurred to him.

"Oh, she won't flirt with you! She is too womanly good for anything of that kind," Alnay said, promptly and dryly.

Berimo shrugged his handsome broad shoulders with a gesture of doubt. He fancied he had yet to meet the woman who could help responding to the glances of his great laughing, lazy, magnetic brown eyes; but he did not fancy such a meeting was very likely to befall him during the existing generation of womankind.

"The lady is young and beautiful," Alnay continued. "Her height is five feet four inches, and she weighs one hundred and thirty pounds. Her face is oval, and her features are of the Grecian type. Her hair is dark brown, with a ripple of red gold running through it. Her eyes are large, and a dark purple blue in color. She usually wears black or drab."

"Isn't the description rather incomplete?" Berimo asked.

"It is as complete as the descriptions afforded detectives usually are, unless they are fortunate enough to secure a portrait," said Alnay. "However, I will add that the lady is accomplished, that she sings divinely, and that she indulges in a promenade on Broadway two or three times a week."

"But has she no peculiarity, no little mannerism, no anything which might be noted as a special mark of her individuality?"

"Her only special peculiarities are her grace and loveliness, which are rare and striking. Her complexion is like a white rose, freshly blown, and just warmed by the pink flush of dawn. Her mouth is like a Cupid's bow, carved of dewy pomegranate. Her shoulders are white as a swan's breast, and have the requisite slope of a dove's wings. She walks like a goddess, smiles like an angel and talks with a charming little lisp in a voice as sweet as the music of an Eolian harp. What more would you have? Her age? She is something more than twenty!"

To this catalogue of witcheries Berimo had listened with interest and delight.

"Do you know, my dear fellow," he exclaimed in a sort of enchanted wonder, "that you have portrayed the ideal creature of whom I have dreamed, but whom I have never met? Oh, I shall recognize her, Alnay! And when I find her, I fancy I shall lose one of its illustrious votaries. But am I to have the happiness of beholding her, of identifying her, only on Broadway?"

"She was at the matinee this afternoon," said Alnay. "You may behold her at the theatre sometime in the near future, I do not doubt."

"In what part of the house does she sit? or does the divine creature occupy her own box?" Berimo queried, impatiently.

"Perhaps I had best inform you who she is, and we'll drop the matter of the wager," Alnay remarked, sarcastically.

Berimo's handsome, patrician face flushed slightly at the retort, but his sudden ardor was not chilled in the least.

"Nonsense!" he ejaculated. "I wouldn't drop such an adventure for the world. It is delicious! It is like searching for Cinderella with only the clue of the glass slipper! It is like pursuing Daphne through the enchanted, nymph haunt-

ed wood of old! It will afford a bit of ecstatic excitement—a glorious change from the humdrum monotony of life—which I wouldn't forego for any consideration you might offer! How much time do you allow me, Alnay, in which to win the wager?"

"Oh, you may have all the time you want—anywhere inside a fortnight," Harvey Alnay answered carelessly, as he pushed his chair back from the table and arose to his feet.

And that ended the discussion for a time.

Alnay and Guy Berimo, with a couple of acquaintances, had been dining in a private room of a small but cosy hotel, which is much frequented by members of the theatrical profession.

The four were actors, and all belonged to the

"Why," was the surprised response, "she is Lorna Ravere—the actress who has just been engaged to take Miss Villon's part in 'The Ruby of Jericho,' which we are to play next week. You will meet her at rehearsal to-morrow. You look as if a sight of the lady disturbed you."

"I was married to her once," was Berimo's laconic and astonishing reply.

"Married to her? I thought you were a confirmed celibate," Alnay gasped, incredulously.

"And so I am—by nature, inclination and habit. But all the same that woman, in law, is my wife," Berimo said, savagely.

"Your wife?" repeated Alnay, too amazed for coherent understanding.

tration and of comprehensive observation," said Alnay, using Berimo's own words.

Berimo looked rather crestfallen, and Alnay's mimicry had evidently nettled him; but he paid the bet, with a semblance, at least, of enjoying it as much as his highly amused companions.

However, all the little friendliness which had ever existed between him and Alnay was entirely extinguished by the incident of the lady of the wager. Guy Berimo had become inconsistently, but fearfully and insanely, jealous of the leading man's attentions to the beautiful young actress.

From the beginning to the ending of the rehearsals he glared at the two with the ferocity of an Othello.

In the third act of "The Ruby of Jericho," a party of soldiers was supposed to abduct a sleeping Jewish maiden. One of the soldiers was Berimo, and Miss Ravere was playing the role of the Jewish maid.

The swords worn in the act were not all of paste-board and tinsel. Berimo's was a genuine article, with a jeweled hilt and a Damascus blade; it had been presented to him by some Eastern potentate, and he was very proud of it, and wore it whenever he possibly could.

In the act, the lovely Jewess succumbs to slumber in a bower of blossoms and greenery, where she has just been feeding her doves. Her lover (Alnay) hovers near, concealed by a clump of low palms. He draws nearer, and yet more near; he hesitates to awake her, but his errand is urgent, and love allure him. At length he robs the tempting, unconscious lips of a kiss—light as thistle down, soft as the touch of a butterfly's wing!

At that moment the soldiers spring into the bower, and a fight ensues between them and the lover, who struggles valiantly to rescue his betrothed from the abductors.

Whether Alnay's kiss was too impassioned, or whether Berimo's jealousy made it seem so, is not known.

But Berimo sprang upon the leading man in downright earnest.

In the struggle which ensued Alnay wrenched his deadly sword from him, and made a movement as if to plunge it through his breast.

"What do you mean using such a weapon as that in earnest? I ought to kill you, you contemptible coward!" Alnay said excitedly.

"One of us is better dead," said Berimo. "If she loves you, then kill me—life to me is not worth living without her! I love her, even if she does hate me, and to see another touch her lips maddens me."

He spoke in a strange, intense voice, pathetic with its despairing passion.

But the words had scarcely been uttered when Lorna Ravere flung herself between them.

"You have no cause for your jealousy, Guy," she said softly. "You wrong Alnay, who is a friend to both of us; you wrong me, for, cruelly as you have behaved to me always, I have always cherished for you a wife's affection and fidelity."

There was a moment's pause; and then she was in his arms, strained close to his heart. They were reconciled.

At the beginning of the disturbance, the curtain had been rolled quickly down.

But it went up a moment later, and "The Ruby of Jericho" was played brilliantly to the closing scene.

Berimo was no longer jealous of the leading man's stage kisses.

Guy Berimo has since become a popular actor. But all which he is and has of fame and fortune, he claims he owes to the influence of his estimable and lovely wife—The Lady of the Wager!

LESLIE AND HARDMAN.

We give this week the portraits of one of the best known and most versatile teams on the vaudeville or minstrel stage—John W. Leslie and Joseph A. Hardman. Although the gentlemen have been working as a team only a little over three years, they are by no means new to the business. John W. Leslie was born July 26, 1859, in this city, and made his first professional appearance at the Thirty-fourth Street Opera House, then under the management of Jake Berry, during the season of 1874. Mr. Leslie worked alone for a year, after which he left the stage. His next appearance was in 1879, but he again retired in 1880. He remained in private life until Dec. 31, 1883, when he joined hands with Richard Gorman. As Leslie and Gorman they traveled together until Feb. 9, 1885, when they separated, Mr. Leslie joining H. G. Clark. The team of Leslie and Clark was dissolved Feb. 12, 1886, and three days later the firm of Leslie and Hardman was formed.

Joseph A. Hardman was born in this city July 4, 1861, but moved to Williamsburg, N. Y., when a year old, where he remained until he had reached the age of nine years, when he was left an orphan. Thrown upon his own resources, he came to this city and obtained a position as hall boy in Mrs. Mary Armstrong's Young Ladies' Boarding School on Madison Avenue, where he remained for two years. He then entered the employ of A. B. Lewis & Co., and afterwards E. V. Schneeder, dealers in racing horses, remaining there until 1874. He then became the valet for the Italian Minister at Washington, D. C. Being desirous of becoming a professional, he left the service of the Italian Minister in 1879, and on Sept. 14 he made his professional debut at the Third Avenue Theatre, for Thomas Canary (now of Miner & Canary's Eighth Avenue Theatre), with his brother, as the Hardman Bros., in a neat Irish song and dance. They worked together one season. Joseph changed his name to Joe Morton, and doubled with Dan Williams in Irish songs and dances. After two seasons with Mr. Williams, Mr. Hardman changed to black face and joined hands with R. G. Knowles (now of the Haverly-Cleveland Minstrels), and did a neat blackface comedy sketch for over two years. Mr. Hardman then assumed his right name, and worked alone for a while. His next partner was James G. Brevard (deceased), formerly of the Four Diamonds. They were engaged for Harrigan & Hart's Theatre Comique, where they remained until Mr. Brevard's death, when Mr. Hardman again began playing dates alone, which he continued to do very successfully until he joined John W. Leslie in 1886. As Leslie and Hardman the team have been meeting with much favor.

The constant change of servants gives new point to the proverb, "Every little helps."



same company, which was just then playing a popular melodrama at a certain uptown theatre.

Harvey Alnay was the leading man. He was devoted to his profession, and thoroughly a student. He was talented without being brilliantly so as an actor. This public always knew precisely what to anticipate of him, and the public was always pleased and never disappointed with his performances. As a man, he was straightforward and honorable; an agreeable companion and a faithful friend.

Guy Berimo, despite the Adonis like beauty of his face and his graceful commanding figure, despite his personal magnetism and really brilliant versatility of mind, had somehow always failed to exalt himself above the performance of minor parts.

Between the two—Berimo and Alnay—there existed a sort of passive friendliness, but never anything like confidential intimacy.

The steady going, clear headed and calm hearted Alnay half despised the other for his erratic frivolity and lack of ambition, for his conceit and boastfulness; and then, Guy Berimo was too egotistic to seek or to value a real and mutually helpful friendship with any person.

The quartet of diners presently left the hotel and strolled aimlessly down Broadway together.

They had gone but a few blocks when Alnay saluted a plainly dressed girl, who, at the moment, came quickly around the corner of a cross street.

As he did so the two actors in advance glanced back, and exchanged a significant look with Alnay. She was the lady of the wager!

As she passed, Alnay noticed with surprise that Guy Berimo's handsome face had turned white, angry and embarrassed.

"Will you tell me, Alnay, how and where you happen to have made the acquaintance of that woman?" he asked, in a strange, harsh, low voice.

"The marriage was none of my seeking," the other scowled. "My family wished it, and the girl's mother implored it when dying; and I yielded—only Heaven knows why! It was a regular, romantic death-bed farce; and from then until now I have never seen the girl. I would have provided for her, but she would accept nothing from me. I was as hateful to her as she was distasteful to me evidently."

"Why did you object to her?" Alnay queried.

"I don't admire plain women," was the short and testy answer.

"Plain?" Alnay echoed. "I think Miss Ravere the reverse of plain! In fact, to be frank with you, Berimo, I am half in love with this girl, whom you don't want for your wife?"

"There is no accounting for tastes," growled the other. "But to be frank with you, Alnay, I warn you that I shall not permit you admiring her too warmly. No matter if we do ourselves ignore the bond, all the same she is my wife."

"Very well," said Alnay, laughing with sudden mirth. "And now, if you please, we will have our champagne and cigars."

"You have lost the bet, old man."

"We've won the wager, Guy."

These exclamations were uttered in unison by the two who had been walking in advance.

Berimo stared blankly.

"Oh, but I say this isn't all fair and square, you know," he sputtered at length.

"Why not? All you wanted was the person's description. And none of us knew the lady is your wife."

"A fellow who can't identify his own wife ought to pay double the wager."

"A man who thinks a beautiful woman plain must certainly lack the qualities, or gifts, of keen penetration and of comprehensive observation."

He became sullen, neglectful of his appearance; he failed occasionally to recollect his lines, and, altogether he behaved in a manner which provoked severe reprimands from the manager, and which almost threatened to disorganize "The Ruby of Jericho" itself.

Berimo was a man who viewed a woman through other people's glasses. He failed to appreciate her goodness, or wit, or loveliness, until others had discovered her charms.

Had he met Lorna Ravere, with her quiet manners and plain richness of attire, before he had listened to that glowing eulogy of her attractions, he would very likely have passed her by without having any feeling whatsoever aroused—either of admiration, affection, or a desire to claim her as his own!

As it was, he was now immeasurably proud of her; he was madly jealous if another so much as smiled upon the treasure which belonged to him; and what was better still, he discovered that he really loved her—truly and unutterably, and that he would have counted the "world and the world's prizes and pleasures well lost for her sweet sake."

What Lorna Ravere felt during that time, only Heaven and her own soul knew.

Being all womanly, a jewel of womanhood without flaw or stain, she was wise in hiding her heart.

If she grieved for years of neglect, then she had suffered and made no sign. If she exulted in her conquest, if she rejoiced in Berimo's tardy love, no one knew—Berimo himself least of all!

But that semblance of serene indifference on her side and that terrible jealousy on his, could not endure forever while both were acting, night after night, in the same play on the same stage. A denouement of some sort was inevitable, and what really happened at last was well nigh a tragedy.

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position, and is today better than ever in its peculiar field of journalism. By new arrangements with the newsdealers **THE CLIPPER** is now sold in New Orleans on Fridays instead of Saturdays, which advantage is appreciated by its readers.

Stockton.—At the Avon, Hoyt's "A Hole in the Ground" came March 28. Box showed a packed house. Joseph Hume and company are booked for 19, 21, 26! Ninth Russell 25, "The Little Troop" 27 April 4, Sells Bros. Circus and Menagerie, which has been wintering at Agricultural Park, will start on the road about April 1, with many new features.

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 45,

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 45,

S. S. Stewart's BANJO AND GUITAR JOURNAL FOR APRIL IS NOW READY. PRICE, 10c. PER COPY.

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